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# Northern Plains Resource Council Convention

Max S. Baucus

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Senator \* or Department\*: **BAUCUS**

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(1) Subject\*: Environment

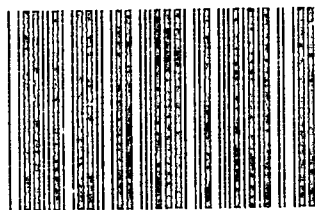
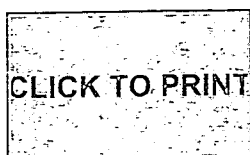
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(2) Subject\* Northern Plains Resource Council Convention

DOCUMENT DATE\*: 11/05/1977

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BAUCUS

REMARKS OF CONGRESSMAN MAX BAUCUS  
BEFORE THE  
NORTHERN PLAINS RESOURCE COUNCIL CONVENTION  
MILES CITY, MONTANA  
NOVEMBER 5, 1977

FOR A CHANGE, I AM NOT GOING TO BEGIN MY DISCUSSION THIS AFTERNOON BY DELINEATING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING MONTANA OR PERTINENT LEGISLATION PENDING BEFORE CONGRESS.

RATHER, SINCE THIS IS THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY THAT I HAVE HAD TO MEET WITH YOU SINCE THE PASSAGE OF THE NATIONAL STRIP MINING ACT, I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU, THE MEMBERS OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS RESOURCE COUNCIL. THE PASSAGE OF THE STRIP MINING ACT WAS A LONG STRUGGLE. BECAUSE OF YOUR EFFORTS AND PERSISTENCE, THE NATIONAL STRIP MINING ACT IS A REALITY. ~~EACH~~<sup>ALL</sup> OF YOU ~~ARE~~<sup>A</sup> TO BE COMMENDED FOR YOUR EFFORTS IN THIS ENDEAVOR. I WOULD LIKE TO PERSONALLY THANK PAT SWEENEY AND KARL ENGLUND FOR THE GENEROUS ASSISTANCE WHICH THEY PROVIDED ME REGARDING THE ALLUVIAL VALLEY AMENDMENT TO THE HOUSE VERSION OF THE STRIP MINING BILL.

LIKE MOST WORTHWHILE LEGISLATION, THE WORK ONLY BEGINS WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL. WE MUST NOW WORK TO INSURE THAT THE NATIONAL STRIP MINING ACT IS PROPERLY IMPLEMENTED. THE COLLECTIVE EFFORTS OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS RESOURCE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO BE NEEDED AS AMERICA INCREASES THE DEVELOPMENT OF HER COAL RESOURCES.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITY:

CONGRESS IS STILL DEBATING AND FORMULATING THE NATIONAL ENERGY ACT. THIS IS AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TASK, PARTICULARLY WHEN OVER HALF OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NO ENERGY CRISIS. THE CRISIS IS REAL.

DIFFERENCES EXIST BETWEEN THE HOUSE AND SENATE VERSIONS OF THE ENERGY PROPOSALS, PARTICULARLY PROVISIONS DEALING WITH THE GAS GUZZLER TAX AND CRUDE OIL EQUILIZATION PROVISIONS. THOSE DIFFERENCES WILL BE IRONED OUT BY THE ENERGY CONFEREES DURING THE COURSE OF THIS MONTH. MORE IMPORTANTLY, BOTH VERSIONS OF THE ENERGY BILL FINALLY RECOGNIZE THE POTENTIAL AND THE PRACTICALITY OF SOLAR AND WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT. BOTH BILLS CONTAIN PROVISIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL TAX CREDIT DESIGNED TO STIMULATE THE USE OF SOLAR AND WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS IN PRIVATE HOMES. SOLAR TECHNOLOGY IN THIS FIELD IS WELL DEVELOPED AND IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE ECONOMICALLY COMPETITIVE WITH OTHER SOURCES OF ENERGY.

ADDITIONALLY, THE NEW FARM ACT CONTAINS PROVISIONS IDENTICAL TO MY SMALL FAMILY FARMS BILL WHICH PROVIDES LOW-INTEREST LOANS THROUGH ✓FHA AND THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SOLAR HEATING AND COOLING EQUIPMENT IN RURAL AREAS.

OTHER LEGISLATION:

COAL SLURRY PIPELINE LEGISLATION WILL BE CONSIDERED SHORTLY AFTER THE CONGRESSIONAL RECESS IN JANUARY. THE OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT WILL ISSUE ITS LONG-AWAITED REPORT REGARDING COAL SLURRY BY THE END OF THE YEAR. IT IS MY FEELING, THAT REGARDLESS OF THE REPORT'S CONTENT, FEW POSITIONS REGARDING COAL SLURRY WILL BE CHANGED.

FRANKLY, WE FACE AN UPHILL FIGHT REGARDING COAL SLURRY DURING THE NEXT SESSION OF CONGRESS.

INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF THE WEST ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR GREAT NATIONAL RESOURCE, WATER. WATER IS OF MAJOR CONCERN FOR AGRICULTURE DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES, AND FOR RECREATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL USES. RECENT DROUGHTS IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY HAVE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER. UNDER THE AUTHORITY DELEGATED TO IT BY CONGRESS UNDER PROVISIONS OF THE WATER RESOURCES PLANNING ACT OF 1965, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS PLANNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY. RECENTLY, I AND SEVERAL OTHER WESTERN CONGRESSMEN INTRODUCED HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 619, WHICH STATES THAT NO NEW NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL CONCURRENCE AND THAT NO PROPOSED REGULATIONS WOULD TAKE EFFECT REGARDING A NATIONAL WATER POLICY FOR A PERIOD OF 6 MONTHS. UNDER PROVISION OF THIS RESOLUTION, STATE GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING NATIONAL WATER POLICY.

MANY OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC LAND POLICIES HAVE BEEN LONG OVERDUE BECAUSE OF BLATANT NEGLECT BY THE PREVIOUS TWO ADMINISTRATIONS. YOUR COMMENTS REGARDING THESE PROPOSALS ARE VITAL AS CONGRESS MOVES TO CONSIDER THEM NEXT YEAR.

#### MONTANA CONCERNS:

CONTINUED VIGILANCE REGARDING THE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ON THE POPLAR RIVER BASIN IS NECESSARY. A MORATORIUM ON ANY FUTURE HYDROELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT IS NEEDED UNTIL PRESENT AND FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ARE STUDIED.

THE DECISION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TO GRANT CLASS I AIR QUALITY DESIGNATION TO THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE RESERVATION WILL HAVE A PROFOUND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT UPON THE AREA.

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA IS LENGTHY. BUT I FEEL THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS, CONGRESS AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH ARE MOVING DECISIVELY ON MANY ENVIRONMENTAL FRONTS.

THIS CONCLUDES MY FORMAL REMARKS. I WOULD BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE AND HOPEFULLY, I WILL BE ABLE TO TALK PERSONALLY WITH MANY OF YOU AFTER THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD IS COMPLETED.